

treated as from the sale or exchange of a capital asset or property treated under section 1231 (except coal or iron ore to which section 631(c) applies), the deferred development expenditures shall be allocated between the interest sold and the interest retained in proportion to the fair market value of each interest as of the date of sale. The amount allocated to the interest sold may not be deducted, but shall be a part of the basis of such interest for the purpose of determining gain or loss upon the sale thereof.

(d) *Losses from abandonment.* Section 165 and the regulations thereunder contain general rules relating to the treatment of losses resulting from abandonment.

(e) *Effect of election.* (1) The election to defer development expenditures shall apply only to expenditures for the taxable year for which made. However, once made, the election shall be binding with respect to the expenditures for that taxable year. Thus, a taxpayer cannot revoke his election for any reason whatsoever.

(2) The election shall be made for each mine or other natural deposit by a clear indication on the return or by a statement filed with the district director with whom the return was filed, not later than the time prescribed by law for filing such return (including extensions thereof) for the taxable year to which such election is applicable.

(f) *Computation of amount of deduction.* The amount of the deduction allowable during the taxable year is an amount A, which bears the same ratio to B (the total deferred development expenditures for a particular mine or other natural deposit reduced by the amount of such expenditures deducted in prior taxable years) as C (the number of units of the ore or mineral benefited by such expenditures sold during the taxable year) bears to D (the number of units of ore or mineral benefited by such expenditures remaining as of the taxable year). For the purposes of this proportion, the *number of units of ore or mineral benefited by such expenditures remaining as of the taxable year* is the number of units of ore or mineral benefited by the deferred development expenditures remaining at the end of the year to be recovered from the mine

or other natural deposit (including units benefited by such expenditures recovered but not sold) plus the number of units benefited by such expenditures sold within the taxable year. The principles outlined in § 1.611-2 are applicable in estimating the number of units remaining as of the taxable year and the number of units sold during the taxable year. The estimate is subject to revision in accordance with that section in the event it is ascertained, from any source, such as operations or development work, that the remaining units are materially greater or less than the number of units remaining from a prior estimate.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11737, Nov. 26, 1960, as amended by T.D. 6841, 30 FR 9307, July 27, 1965]

§ 1.616-3 Time for making election with respect to returns due on or before May 2, 1960.

In the case of any taxable year beginning after December 31, 1953, and ending after August 16, 1954, the income tax return for which is due not later than May 2, 1960, the time to deduct or defer development expenditures for such a year under section 616 (a) or (b) shall expire on May 2, 1960.

§ 1.617-1 Exploration expenditures.

(a) *General rule.* Section 617 prescribes rules for the treatment of expenditures paid or incurred after September 12, 1966, for ascertaining the existence, location, extent, or quality of any deposit of ore or other mineral for which a deduction for depletion is allowable under section 613 (other than oil or gas) paid or incurred by the taxpayer before the beginning of the development stage of the mine or other natural deposit. Such expenditures hereinafter in the regulations under section 617 will be referred to as exploration expenditures. The development stage of the mine or other natural deposit will be deemed to begin at the time when, in consideration of all the facts and circumstances (including the actions of the taxpayer), deposits of ore or other mineral are disclosed in sufficient quantity and quality to reasonably justify commercial exploitation by the taxpayer. For example, core drilling expenditures paid or incurred